

Kentucky Teacher

November 2006

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

www.education.ky.gov

Stacie Hardy
Campbell Ridge Elementary School
8 years in the classroom
2 years as assistant principal



Photos by Rick McComb

Reporters, family, friends and government dignitaries fill the rotunda of the Capitol in Frankfort for the announcement of Kentucky's 2007 Teacher of the Year. A field of 24 Teacher Achievement Award winners was narrowed down to three Teachers of the Year, one at each level. Susanne Burkhardt, a teacher at Simpsonville Elementary (Shelby County) was named the overall 2007 Kentucky Teacher of the Year.

Susanne Burkhardt named 2007 Teacher of the Year

Lisa Y. Gross

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Susanne Burkhardt, a teacher at Simpsonville Elementary (Shelby County), was named 2007 Kentucky Teacher of the Year during a ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort. Diana Glenn, a science teacher at East Hardin Middle School (Hardin County), was named 2007 Middle School Teacher of the Year, while Teresa (Tracy) Lambert, a language arts teacher at Lafayette High School (Fayette County), was named 2007 High School Teacher of the Year.

The three educators join 21 other teachers from across the state who were honored with 2007 Ashland Inc. Teacher Achievement Awards. The Teacher of the Year program is sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Education and Ashland Inc. Gov. Ernie Fletcher, Acting Deputy Secretary of Education Sally Hamilton, Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit and Ashland Chairman and CEO Jim O'Brien were on hand to make the presentations at the Oct. 13 event.

Glenn and Lambert received \$3,000 each and a customized art-glass vase from Ash-

land Inc. Burkhardt received \$10,000 and a commemorative crystal glass bowl. In addition, the Department of Education will provide a sabbatical or suitable alternative to Burkhardt, who also will represent the state in the 2007 National Teacher of the Year competition. The remaining 21 winners each received \$500 cash awards. All 24 teachers received framed certificates and were honored at a luncheon following the ceremony.

Susanne Burkhardt

Burkhardt has 15 years' teaching experience, three of them in her current position as an elementary school teacher. She earned her bachelor's degree at Wittenberg University in Ohio and a master's degree at John Carroll University in Ohio.

Burkhardt has achieved National Board Certification in the Early Childhood Generalist category, and she has continued her educational and leadership development as a participant and presenter of numerous training programs throughout her career. She is a member of the Kentucky chapter of the National Board of Professional Teaching



Burkhardt

See SUSANNE on Page 9

CATS and SEEK funding dominate board discussion

By Cathy Lindsey

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Changes are on the horizon for the state's education assessment and accountability system. At its October meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education discussed possible revisions in school accountability

weighting and inclusion of a norm-referenced test and the ACT in accountability calculations.

Senate Bill 130, passed during the 2006 General Assembly, requires that the state's accountability system include a high school readiness exam in grade 8 and a college readiness exam in grade 10. It also requires that the ACT exam be administered to students in grade 11. The law establishes that these exams be used in lieu of a norm-referenced test.

Kentucky Department of Education staff presented rationale and recommendations to the board on how to implement the legislation. The board took no action in October but will continue to discuss these issues at its November meeting.

Department staff also made a presentation on the Supporting Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) school funding formula. Since 1990, numerous reviews of the SEEK formula have demonstrated that it has performed as designed, narrowing the difference between the highest property wealth districts and districts with the lowest property wealth.

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591 Kentucky schools meet or exceed biennial accountability goals

By Lisa Y. Gross

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Results from the 2005-2006 accountability cycle of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) show that more than half of the state's public schools met or exceeded their individual goals. Forty-one schools are in the assistance categories.

Scores from the April 2006 administration of the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT)

and the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) and the school accountability performance judgments based on the 2005 and 2006 results were released in late September. Non-academic data, which also is a component of school and district accountability indices, was released last May.

"In every subject tested, at each grade level, students' achievement levels are

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Bulletin Board



Photo by Rick McComb

Heritage Elementary (Shelby County)

Bulletin Board is compiled by Joy Barr
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Conferences

English/language arts

The Kentucky Council of Teachers of English/Language Arts will hold its annual conference Feb. 9-10, 2007, at the Marriott Griffin Gate in Lexington.

<http://conference.kcte.org/>

Music educators

The Kentucky Music Educators Association has scheduled an in-service/professional development conference Feb. 8-10, 2007, at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville.

www.kmea.org/conference/confreg.htm

Events

Ag Day poster and essay contest

Students in grades P-8 may participate in the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's annual Ag Day poster and essay contest. Winners for each grade will receive a \$100 savings bond. The theme for this year's contest is "Kentucky Farms are Fun." Entries must be postmarked by Feb. 24, 2007.

www.kyagr.com/mkt_promo/education/kaec/programs/postercontest/winners.htm

IMAX theatre schedule

IMAX films now showing at the Louisville Science Center are "Wild Safari: A South African Adventure" through Dec. 2; "Lewis and Clark: Great Journey West" through Jan. 12, 2007; and "Ride Around the World" through May 25, 2007.

Box office: (502) 561-6100

www.louisvillescience.org/imax.shtml

"Sweet" fall exhibition

Teachers can schedule a field trip to see the Louisville Science Center's new fall exhibit, "Jelly Belly® Presents Candy Unwrapped." On display through January 2007, the exhibit's interactive components expose the science of sweets and sours by revealing the biology, chemistry, physiology and psychology of candy.

www.louisvillescience.org/exhibits.shtml

State parks specials

Kentucky local, state or federal employees and retirees can take advantage of reduced rates on lodge rooms and cottages offered by the Kentucky State Parks' "Commonwealth Connection" program. Rates are good from Nov. 1 through March 31, 2007, subject to availability. Some park special events weekends may be excluded from the discounts.

Make reservations by calling toll free (800) 255-7275. Mention the "Commonwealth Connection" to receive the special rate, or visit www.parks.ky.gov on the Internet and use the promo code "CC6" if making a reservation online. Proof of government employment is required at check-in.

MLK Day concert

The Louisville Orchestra will present "A Martin Luther King Day Concert," Jan. 12, 2007, at 10:30 a.m. at the Kentucky Center for the Arts. This concert, suitable for all ages, celebrates diversity in the community and reflects on King's life. The program features soprano Laquita Mitchell and guest dancers. Tickets are \$7 per student.

Contact: Deborah Moore Kushmaul, (502) 585-9426, dmoore@louisvilleorchestra.org

Social studies showcases

The Kentucky Educational Publishers Association will host social studies textbook/instructional resources showcases throughout the state. Dates and locations are posted on the Kentucky Department of Education Web site.

Contact: Ann Asbeck, Kentucky Department of Education instructional resources consultant, (502) 564-2106, ann.asbeck@education.ky.gov.

www.education.ky.gov — Click on "KDE QuickLinks," scroll down to "Textbooks and Instructional Resources"

and click. Select "Adoption Group 11 — Social Studies (2007-2012)."

OAH teacher award

The Organization of American Historians sponsors an annual award to recognize the contributions made by history teachers. The OAH Tachau Teacher of the Year award is designed to enhance the intellectual development of history teachers. The winner receives \$1,000 and other gifts. Applications must be received by Dec. 1.

www.oah.org/activities/awards/tachau/index.html

Japan Fulbright program

The Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program provides P-12 teachers and administrators with the opportunity to participate in three-week study visits to Japan. Participants return home with a follow-up plan designed to introduce Japanese culture to American students. Deadline for applications for the 2007 program is Dec. 7.

www.iie.org/jfmf

Outdoor classroom grant

The Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation, International Paper and the *National Geographic Explorer!* classroom magazine offer grants to P-12 schools to improve their science curricula by building an outdoor classroom or improving an existing one. Any setup from a garden to a bird sanctuary to an outdoor laboratory can qualify. Annual awards between \$2,000 and \$20,000 are given to 100 public schools. Application deadline is Dec. 31.

www.lowes.com/lowes/1kn?action=pg&p>AboutLowes/outdoor/index.html

Conservation writing and art contests

"Kentucky's Soil: It's Worth Protecting" is the topic for this year's Conservation Writing and Jim Claypool Conservation Art contests, sponsored by the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts and *The Courier-Journal*. Teachers can use a tabloid publication about the conservation topic that has been supplied to schools to integrate conservation education in their classrooms. Deadline for submitting school winners to each district office is Dec. 1.

www.courier-journal.com/nie/soil2006

Resources

Looking for dads

Get dads more involved at school through the All Pro Dad program. All Pro Dad, a group of National Football League (NFL) players, is headed by Indianapolis Colts' Head Coach Tony Dungy. The program encourages men to become better fathers. Resources are available at no cost to schools.

www.AllProDad.com

Star Count

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Web site, "Star Count," allows middle school students to investigate whether people in different parts of the world see the same number of stars. Students share their data with other students from all over the world to find out why differences might occur.

www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/starcount/home

Free museum membership

As a part of its education initiative effort, leaders of the Lexington History Museum are waiving membership dues for interested teachers. The free membership allows teachers to more easily take advantage of curriculum-related museum visits and to use the expanded online resources, programming and in-school volunteer work. To receive a free membership, teachers must complete the request form available on the museum Web site.

www.LexingtonHistoryMuseum.org/kids/teachers/index.html

Commissioner's Comments

Our work continues as board seeks next commissioner

By Kevin Noland

Interim Commissioner of Education

Here in the Kentucky Department of Education, I've been fielding this question lately: "Is it third time's the charm or three strikes, and you're out?"

I prefer to think that my third time of serving as Kentucky's Interim Commissioner of Education is more like "good things come in threes!" It is indeed an honor to be asked again to lead the department while the Kentucky Board of Education begins the search and selection process for Kentucky's fourth Commissioner of Education.

For those of you who do not know me, I have been involved in education throughout my career as an attorney and state government employee. While I was a staff member of the Legislative Research Commission, I helped draft the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990. I have been General Counsel for the Kentucky Department of Education since 1991. I continue to be chief attorney for the commissioner's office, the department and the state board.

I also have been deputy commissioner of the department since 2001, overseeing internal operational functions of the agency. Under my purview are department support services such as communications, budgeting, financial management, human resources and the Kentucky Education Technology System, which maintains and supports the electronic network, messaging and financial management services used by schools and districts.

Linda France has been a deputy commissioner for the department since May 2003. She oversees much of the department's direct work with schools and dis-

tricts — school finances, facilities and data management, transportation, and nutrition and health services. In addition, Linda is responsible for the offices that work most closely with classroom teachers and administrators in the areas of teaching and learning, assessment and accountability, and leadership and school improvement.

I served as interim commissioner in 1995 and again in 2000. I look forward to this assignment knowing we have much to accomplish during the coming months.

Helping low-performers

Fall 2006 is a busy time for the department, our schools and districts. With the September announcement of the results from the 2005-2006 accountability cycle of the Commonwealth Accountability System (CATS), we know that 41 schools and eight districts will be provided targeted state assistance to help improve their progress toward proficiency.

These numbers are slightly lower than at the end of the 2003-2004 accountability cycle. However, I share the concern of the state board and department staff that some schools and districts continue to struggle in providing the best possible learning environments for their students. Teams of department staff, educators, parents and community stakeholders are conducting scholastic audits in low-performing schools and districts to evaluate the learning environment, efficiency and student academic performance and to make recommendations for improvement.

Once the results of the audits are compiled, Highly Skilled Educators, who have been selected and trained by the department, will begin working in certain schools

and districts. They will provide support and resources to teachers and administrators as they work together to improve teaching and learning in their buildings.

In addition to the mandatory scholastic audits, teams will be conducting voluntary scholastic reviews in progressing and high-performing schools and districts. These reviews provide lessons from successful schools that can be used to help the schools that are struggling. Our work in moving schools toward proficiency and beyond by 2014 will remain intense.

Focus on leadership

Deputy Commissioner France, other department staff, legislators and leaders in Boone, Daviess, Jefferson and Kenton counties began an exciting three-year Executive Leadership Training Program for Educators at Harvard this summer. The program, funded by the Wallace Foundation, helps participants reinforce their skills at leading change, reducing barriers, and improving teaching and learning in public schools.

We will be looking to this group to share its work on improving school leadership and instructional practices with other school leaders. We know from past scholastic audits and national research data that strong instructional leadership is a common characteristic of successful, high-performing schools that must be emulated in all Kentucky schools and districts.

Secondary initiatives

This fall semester, middle and high schools have gotten access to the Web-enabled Individual Learning Plan (ILP). This document will allow adults in our public schools to work with students and their parents to chart each student's secondary education path and explore and prepare for future careers.

Students will begin using the ILP in the 6th grade and continue refining it through their high school careers. We expect students and teachers to be more focused on individual student success as they work together to plan for postsecondary studies and careers.

The ILP is just one component of the statewide initiative to refocus secondary education. A cadre of high schools and their feeder middle schools are working as the Kentucky Secondary Alliance to explore and pilot innovative and unique programs that provide all

secondary students with a rigorous and relevant education. Alliance schools are working to make those vital connections with today's students.

2007 legislation

The General Assembly meets for 30 legislative days beginning in January 2007. The state board is in the process of developing a legislative agenda that successfully can be addressed in the short session.

During the shorter, odd-year sessions, bills that raise revenue or appropriate funds generally are harder to pass since they require a three-fifths vote by members in each chamber to become law. That may mean that issues like funding for preschool and full-day kindergarten, as well as changes in the Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) formula, may need to be pushed to the 2008 legislative agenda. The board, however, is following pre-filed bills and preparing to take positions on several studies and initiatives that are under way.

2007 CATS testing

This spring will signal the first administration of the CATS assessments under Kentucky's latest testing contract. As you've read in *Kentucky Teacher* over the past year, changes are being made to the state testing system that will take effect with the 2007 tests, which will be administered during the spring testing window, April 23 – May 4.

Two of Kentucky's curriculum documents, *Kentucky's Program of Studies for Grades Primary – 12* and *Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment* have been revised to reflect current education standards and to better help educators connect instruction, curriculum and assessment. Department staff has been training teachers throughout the state to use the revised documents and the new Depth of Knowledge indicators to support learning and understanding at higher-thinking levels.

In addition, we all must continue working to achieve the state board's priorities:

- closing achievement gaps so that every student — regardless of race, gender, geography, family income or diverse learning need, is achieving at high levels
- improving literacy so that every child leaves primary reading at or above proficiency and sustains his or her reading skills throughout the child's school experience
- reducing dropout rates so that every student is connected to the school community in productive ways and stays in school to receive a diploma

I look forward to working more directly with you in the coming months.

(To comment on this topic, contact Interim Commissioner Noland at kevin.noland@education.ky.gov.)



Noland



Photos by Rick McComb

Reading buddies

Fifth-grader Lindsey Nethery, left, and Kiah James, an early primary student, share a story as Reading Buddies at Heritage Elementary (Shelby County). Early primary teacher Becky Lucas and 5th-grade teacher Mary Roach bring students in the two classes together each week for literature activities. The older students help the younger students increase their reading skills.

Kentucky Reading Project gives teachers focus on literacy instruction and practice

By Cathy Lindsey

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Reading skills are undeniably vital to student success — success not only in school, but in life after school. Research shows that students who read well in the early grades are more successful in later years, and those whose reading skills fall behind often stay behind when it comes to academic achievement.

Reading is so important to student success that the Kentucky Board of Education has made it a priority to improve literacy so that every child leaves primary reading at or above proficiency and sustains that level throughout his or her school experience.

To help accomplish this, the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development created the Kentucky Reading Project (KRP), a professional development initiative for teachers designed to strengthen the literacy achievement of Kentucky students in the primary years.

"The program was created to train elementary teachers across the state in evidence-based reading research and instruction in order to improve student achievement in reading," said Cary Pappas, assistant director of the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development.

KRP is sponsored by the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development. This collaboration of the eight state public universities and the National Center for Literacy was established to make training available for educators in reliable, replicable, research-based reading models and to promote family involvement in literacy. The center is housed in and operated by the College of Education at the University of Kentucky.

The goal of the KRP is to empower P-5 teachers to design and implement comprehensive, research-based instruction driven by the ongoing assessment of diverse learners' needs. It has served more than 2,200 teachers in 148 school districts since its inception in 1998.

The yearlong graduate-level reading course is an in-depth study of current research-based reading practices, as well as strategies for implementing them in the classroom. The course consists of a two-week summer institute, four follow-up sessions during the school year and at least one coaching visit to each teacher.

"Participating teachers receive three hours of graduate credit, tuition, a stipend, books and teaching materials," Pappas said, "in addition to gaining knowledge and working with other teachers."

In the classroom

"The KRP curriculum taught me a balanced approach to teaching reading," said Stacie Hardy, a 1999 KRP participant. "I learned how to meet the needs of my individual students, as well as my class as a whole."

Hardy is now an assistant principal at Campbell Ridge Elementary (Campbell County). Since 2003, she also has worked with KRP as a teacher leader.

"I am able to share my experiences and the knowledge I gained in the reading project with my staff through modeling lessons in the classrooms and creating a school-wide literacy plan," Hardy said.

During the summer institute, KRP participants design a Literacy Action Plan that will be implemented in the classroom during the next school year. They select two to three components of a balanced literacy approach as the focus of their plan.

"The Literacy Action Plan was my favorite aspect of the program," said Kristen Rodgers Celani, a 2004 participant in the program. "The purpose is to give structure to all the wonderful literacy instruction and activities you learned in the KRP."

Within the action plan, participants determine their schools' priority needs and set goals that will address those needs. The teachers then outline how they will address each aspect of literacy instruction within the day. Teachers also must include how they will provide reading interventions for struggling readers, and they must choose a focus area for gathering data.

Celani taught 5th grade at McFerran Preparatory Academy in Jefferson County. She is currently a "math-released teacher" working on a GE mathematics and science grant awarded to Jefferson County Public Schools.

"My classroom instruction benefited greatly from my participation in KRP," Celani said. "Before

KRP, I attempted many different things in my literacy instruction, yet my instruction lacked structure and focus. My activities and instruction were not cohesive, and I was only meeting some students' needs.

"My students benefited from my participation (in KRP) by having a cohesive literacy program that provided appropriate literacy activities," she continued. "Within this literacy program, students were provided opportunities to choose their own literature and discuss their readings in book clubs."

A literature discussion consists of a group of three to six students discussing interpretations of a commonly read text, Celani explained. These student literature discussions are authentic literacy activities or events that can promote the use of literacy skills and provide opportunities to practice reading skills. The social interaction can be motivational for many students, and teachers can individualize instruction in the small group setting, she said.

At the end of the yearlong teacher training program, the KRP hosts a culminating event, the Share Fair. Teachers from all eight university sites convene in a central location to share the Literacy Action Plans they have developed and implemented during the year.

"The day is a time of celebration, networking and learning," Pappas said.

Elementary teachers are encouraged to apply to the KRP as members of a school team. Each team will develop and implement a plan focused on a balanced literacy approach to improve the performance of their students. Individual teachers also will be considered for selection to the KRP as space allows.

"Teachers should apply for the Kentucky Reading Project to develop and organize their literacy instruction," Celani said. "Teachers should consider KRP as an opportunity to challenge their literacy instruction in a supportive, highly professional, enthusiastic environment."

In December 2006, principals at every Kentucky public elementary school will receive brochures and applications for the 2007-2008 KRP. Applications also will be available online at www.kentuckyliteracy.org.



Photo by Rick McComb

Campbell Ridge Elementary primary students Michaela Sturgeon-Patrick, left, and Christian Henderson discuss what they are reading as they prepare a class presentation on fiction and nonfiction writing as part of a lesson modeled by Stacie Hardy, assistant principal. Hardy, a 1999 Kentucky Reading Project participant, has been a teacher leader for the project since 2003.

The KRP curriculum is based on 11 key instructional elements:

- Applying theory and research to meet the needs of all students
- Addressing equity and diversity issues and their impact on literacy instruction
- Providing assistance to struggling readers
- Using phonemic awareness, phonics and word recognition strategies to develop fluency
- Identifying processes and strategies for teaching reading comprehension using a variety of texts and technologies
- Integrating and understanding the relationship of reading and writing
- Teaching reading and writing across the curriculum
- Using formal and informal assessments to inform instruction
- Designing and managing a balanced literacy approach
- Emphasizing family involvement in literacy
- Focusing instruction on literary, informational, persuasive and practical reading as identified in the *Kentucky Program of Studies* and *Core Content for Assessment*.

Kentucky Reading Project Directors

Faculty members from all eight state universities serve as directors and instructional leaders for the Kentucky Reading Project. They work in collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education's Reading First coaches. Training specialists from the National Center for Family Literacy also provide information, resources and support for family involvement in literacy. For more information, contact:

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KY Tech is first system in nation to get SACS-CASI accreditation

By Fran Dundon

Kentucky Office of Career and Technical Education

It's a first in setting a nationwide benchmark for technical education accreditation. Kentucky's Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) and its KY Tech System of 55 state-operated area technology centers (ATC) have become the first secondary technical education school system in the nation to be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) – Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (CASI).

In the fall of 2004, the OCTE officially contacted SACS to apply for district accreditation. The office was approved to become a candidate in October 2005. In preparing for the accreditation visit, people from all levels of the system worked together to create program, school and district continuous improvement plans. The hard work paid off.

On Sept. 13, 2006, OCTE employees heard the good news from SACS-CASI Associate Execu-

tive Director for Operations Mont Bush: "The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) team recommends, without reservation, to the SACS-CASI Board of Directors that KY Tech be awarded district accreditation as a quality school system. I want to say that at this moment, you are accredited."

During the unprecedented accreditation visit, the 16-member QAR team conducted an intense three-day interview and documentation process to determine if KY Tech met standards for accreditation; demonstrated a system and continuous process of improvement; and implemented methods that provide for quality assurance.

"I've never seen a better continuous improvement plan than the one KY Tech put together. Without a doubt, KY Tech has raised the bar for site visits," says Kentucky SACS-CASI Director Robert Storer. "These schools are meeting quality standards and accreditation is an affirmation that they are going beyond what they have to do to provide quality assurance."

The QAR team interviewed 454 people, including a variety of stakeholders who support KY Tech's vision, mission and goals. Team members traveled approximately 2,000 miles to make official site visits to 12 ATCs including Boone County, Caldwell County, Casey County, Floyd County, Hughes Jones Harrodsburg, J.D. Patton, Lake Cumberland, Lee County, Lincoln County, Montgomery County, Ohio County and Rockcastle County.

Kentucky Education Cabinet Secretary Laura E. Owens said the accreditation reflects the quality of career and technical education in the commonwealth.

"This recommendation is a testament to the quality staff, students and administrators we have throughout the state tech system," Owens said. "Being the first career and technical education district to gain this kind of recognition places Kentucky in a leadership role for all secondary career and technical systems to emulate."

"This is historic for our system



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

David Billingsley, director of the Kentucky Office of Career and Technical Education, background, listens as Mont Bush, associate executive director for operations for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Council on Accreditation and School Improvement, announces that the state's KY Tech school system has received accreditation.

as well as SACS. It's the culmination of a team effort from all of our employees," said David Billingsley, executive director of OCTE. "However, SACS accreditation isn't the end of a process. It's the beginning of the implementation phase as we strive continually to improve our system to better assist the students we serve. It's also a

journey to become the national flagship for career and technical education."

In the U. S. and overseas, SACS-CASI accredits more than 13,000 schools and school systems. Its mission is "to help schools improve student learning through accreditation."

OCTE is an agency of the Kentucky Education Cabinet's Department for Workforce Investment. OCTE administers 55 area technology centers, which are secondary

schools that offer students hands-on training in business, graphics, construction, manufacturing, automotive and information technology fields, and health and human services.

MORE INFO ...
www.kytech.ky.gov

KET series examines importance of the arts in early childhood education



Photo by Steve Shaffer, KET

The West Louisville Talent and Education Center in Louisville is one of the arts education programs featured in "Art to Heart." Preschool and elementary school-age children at the center participate in a Suzuki violin program headed by Keith Cook, a violinist with the Louisville Orchestra.

This fall, Kentucky Educational TV (KET) premieres "Art to Heart," a unique new educational resource for teachers, parents and child-care providers. The first of its kind, "Art to Heart" is an eight-part series about the importance of the arts as a form of early self-expression for children from infancy through age eight. Supplemental materials tied to state and national standards — including expanded information, activities, lesson plans and a viewing guide will be available soon at www.ket.org/arttoheart.

The eight half-hour programs will be block-fed on KET3 Nov. 13 beginning at noon (11 a.m. CT), Jan. 15, 2007, at 4 p.m. (3 p.m. CT), Feb. 12, at 6 a.m. (5 a.m. CT) and April 16, at 6 a.m. (5 a.m. CT). The series also will air Wednesdays, beginning Nov. 1 at 7:30 p.m. (6:30 p.m. CT) on KET2 and Mondays, beginning Nov. 27 at 5 a.m. (4 a.m. CT) on KET1. In addition, the series will air as part of the training content for credit for preschool educators and child-care professionals.

Hosted by actress Ana Ortiz, "Art to Heart" presents music, dance, drama, literature and the visual arts as essential components of early childhood education and foundations for learning and development. "We wanted to make the case that the arts are an indispensable part of the learning process for young children and provide examples of how the arts benefit the whole child and offer more ways for children to succeed," said producer and director Guy Mendes.

To achieve these goals, "Art to Heart" visits model art-education programs. The nationally recognized institutions featured include the Speed Art Museum's Art Sparks Gallery in Louisville and the Smithsonian Early Enrichment Center in Washington, D.C. Among those appearing in the series are Harvard educator Howard Gardner and country singer Dolly Parton, founder of the "Imagination Library."

The series provides a view into classrooms where teachers, artists and parents help young learners express their creativity. Some Kentucky schools featured in the series are Byck Elementary (Jefferson County), schools in the

Daviess County School District, the Grayson-Breckinridge Head Start program in Leitchfield, Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary Elementary School in Lexington, St. Agnes Elementary in Louisville and West Louisville Talent and Education Center.

MORE INFO ...
KET offices toll free, (800) 432-0951
www.ket.org/education
www.ket.org/arttoheart
Kentucky educators may order the series on DVD for \$50 plus \$4.95 shipping by calling toll free, (800) 945-9167.

Teachers have new opportunities for sharing via H-Kentucky listserv

H-Kentucky, a new humanities and social sciences network listserv, focuses on "History, Heritage and Culture in the Bluegrass State." The Kentucky Association of Teachers of History, the Kentucky Historical Society and the Kentucky Virtual Library are the organizers of the listserv.

H-Kentucky offers an online collaborative environment to facilitate communication and the exchange of scholarly and pedagogical ideas among teachers, researchers, scholars, advanced students and related professionals (e.g., local historians, librarians, archivists, genealogists). This listserv is

designed both for those who work in Kentucky in a history/humanities field and for those across the nation who have an interest in Kentucky history and heritage.

Listserv members receive information via e-mail about history-related events taking place in Kentucky and original reviews of books, articles, Web sites, museums and films that might be of interest to Kentucky faculty and teachers. Job announcements also can be placed on the listserv.

MORE INFO ...
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www.h-net.org/~kentucky — to subscribe

Paula Cissell's innovative strategies bring student success in mathematics

By Joy Barr

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In Paula Cissell's classroom at Beaumont Middle School, students call an integer an integer and a vertex a vertex. Cissell models the correct mathematical terminology, and her students use it fluently. They confidently and accurately use terms such as line of symmetry, independent and dependent variables, symmetrical and parabola in class.

Using mathematics vocabulary is just one of the many ways that Cissell engages her students in meaningful mathematics. "I love the challenge of trying to get students to see the importance of mathematics and how they use it in their everyday life," said Cissell, who admits that mathematics is her hobby. She enjoys working logic puzzles and brainteasers.

Engaging 1,000-plus students at the Fayette County middle school is reflected in the school's overall mission to increase student achievement. Cissell, an 8th-grade mathematics teacher, has been a crucial link in helping the school raise its Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) academic index in mathematics from 75.7 in 1999 to 91.2 in 2005. She shares her instructional skills and practices with other school and district teachers through professional development training.

Retired principal Tom Mowery said Cissell is an exemplary teacher who makes a real difference in the classroom. For her efforts, he nominated Cissell to receive a Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). Cissell and Jefferson County's Melissa Payne were among the 100 7th- through 12th-grade teachers to receive the honor in 2005.

Mowery, a 1984 Kentucky PAEMST winner, said, "Not only is Ms. Cissell deserving of the award, she will bring honor to the program by being recognized. She is an extraordinary young teacher who holds students to a high standard, and she provides whatever assistance necessary to help them meet high expectations."

Cissell says she has received professional benefits from participating in the Presidential Award program. "This process has allowed me to grow as a teacher because it required me to analyze my classroom tactics. It is also an opportunity to meet and learn from other great teachers," she said.

Cissell has been an educator for 11 years. She is a National Board Certified Teacher in Early Adolescence/Mathematics.

"I feel incredibly honored to be selected as Kentucky's representative for this award," she said. "We have many super-

star mathematics teachers in our state. I have been blessed throughout my career to work with wonderful colleagues from whom I learned a great deal. Teaching has been a fun adventure due to the many wonderful students whom I have taught."

Cissell says she plans her lessons around Kentucky's core content and the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics' principles and standards. One of the many lessons she teaches is the introduction of quadratic functions in graphic and tabular form. She teaches students to read graphs and tables and to answer questions about the represented situation.

This helps her students develop an awareness of how quadratic functions differ from those that are linear or exponential. Students learn to recognize quadratic functions through patterns in tables and graphs, and discern the line of symmetry and maximum point in graphs of quadratic functions, she said.

One of Cissell's strengths is teacher-student interaction and engagement. She often uses humor in the classroom and uses her students in many of the discussions. It helps build a relaxed atmosphere in her classroom. Students are engaged and on task throughout the lesson, yet they feel comfortable about asking questions, sharing, discussing and presenting.

Cissell encourages her students to explore, reflect and construct their own mental models. She works to give each student a true understanding of the content rather than let them use rote memorization of rules and formulas. This exploration model allows all students to access the curriculum, no matter where they are developmentally, she said.

Cissell describes her teaching philosophy as "the guide on the side" rather than "the sage on the stage." While the featured lesson is teacher-directed in some ways, her students learn through discovery, working in pairs, discussing their work and presenting their work to other class members. She asks questions as needed but overall the students drive the instruction. Her role is more of a facilitator, rather than a lecturer, she said.

This veteran mathematics teacher has high expectations for all students. Those expectations are reflected in the higher-order questioning she employs and in her lesson design.

She expects all students to thoroughly explain their answers to mathematics problems using correct terminology. Students think and construct knowledge for themselves as Cissell supports them by asking leading questions.

Cissell's lessons are a reflection of her classroom environment. She has an easy rapport with her students. They feel comfortable asking questions and making mistakes. Cissell helps students realize that everyone makes mistakes, even the teacher, and she seizes mistakes as learning opportunities.

Students are willing to share and discuss their work and to help each other. Because of this sharing, discussion and cooperation, student learning is enhanced, she said.

Danielle Hall, a former student, has good memories of Cissell. "Ms. Cissell was my 6th-grade pre-algebra teacher, and after a long year of mathematics I managed to pass on into algebra. Ms. Cissell had a different way of instructing us than the other teachers. The atmosphere in her room was always bright and cheery due to the brightly painted walls and multiple posters she had hanging," Hall said. "Every night she gave us homework, and the next day Ms. Cissell would slowly walk around and check to see that we had done it. She didn't take up our homework and deduct for the incorrect answers, but gave us an effort grade for trying. She always had extreme energy when she was teaching our class, and her energy was contagious. We never moved on to a new topic until everyone in the class was caught up."

MORE INFO ...

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Photo by Rick McComb

Beaumont Middle School student Yuki Inoue works with mathematics teacher Paula Cissell to create a 3-D vector equilibrium.



Photo by Rick McComb

Melissa Payne is 'mad' about teaching science

By Joy Barr

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Smoke bellowing from beakers, sounds of explosions and great balls of fire igniting in midair are just a few of the tricks and treats Melissa Payne serves up to her chemistry students at Jefferson-town High School. While Payne may not actually be the "mad scientist" she's sometimes affectionately called, she is "mad" about science and enthusiastically engages her students in scientific processes and procedures.

"My students learn the chemistry behind the demonstrations, and they learn about safety and the preparation of the materials," said Payne, a science teacher at the Jefferson County high school.

Because of her exceptional teaching, leadership abilities and dedication to students, Payne, along with Fayette County's Paula Cissell, was selected as one of 100 nominees across the United States as a recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. "I am very humbled to receive this award of my peers," said Payne.

"While I always wanted to be a

teacher, it took my chemistry and physics teacher from high school to inspire me to teach science," said Payne. "Mr. Boldrick did amazing experiments and demonstrations that captured my curiosity. I knew from then on that I wanted to be a science teacher."

Payne points out that the subject offers students chances to explore many fields in addition to science. "In any given experiment, stu-

dents will use mathematics to gather, measure and analyze data. They'll use language arts to express their conclusions and explain their procedures. Most of the content also has historical significance that ties in social studies," she said.

Joe Burks, Jefferson County assistant superintendent, nominated Payne for the presidential award. "Missy is a master teacher who utilizes hands-on activities on a daily basis, and her 'lab' is never closed. She has been a JCPS pioneer in teaching an 11th-grade level, integrated science course that is intended for struggling science students who need to learn life science, physical sci-

ence and earth/space science at higher levels," he said. "While many other experienced science teachers tend to teach only advanced courses, Missy has been willing to tackle the tougher route in her quest to move all students toward proficiency at the school. She always seems to put the interests of students, faculty and staff ahead of her own as she influences her school's innovations, shares best instructional practices in local district science alliances and provides quality experiences for her students."

Payne's work with older students is not always easy. "Young students take to science experiments because they're such hands-on and minds-on experiences," Payne adds. "Students always are ready to manipulate materials to find out the answers for themselves without the fear of being incorrect." Unfortunately, as students age, they often lose that curiosity and only want to be told what the answer is without having to think for themselves. Science forces older students to continue asking questions and finding answers, she added.

One of Payne's students, Lauren Dixon, explained how Payne helps students learn to enjoy science. "Ms. Payne makes sure everyone is on the same page in class. We don't move on until the class really understands the material.

Melissa Payne points out the level of an acid-base solution in a beaker as Jeffersontown High School science student Lauren Beck conducts a titration experiment to determine the concentration of the substance in the solution.

My favorite experiment was when we made 'slime.' Science is fun, and I look forward to the class," said Lauren.

Payne uses teacher-lead demonstrations for many of her lessons. She uses questioning techniques, stimulating visual occurrences, discrepant events and her sense of humor to guide students to a better understanding and appreciation of scientific formulas and laws.

"No matter how many times I perform a demonstration, I still get a thrill at watching the amazement in the eyes of the students," said Payne. "This is when learning occurs. Then once they are fully engaged, I can fire questions out to them and use some type of manipulative to reinforce learning. That's the secret to my success — once I have captured the students' imagination and attention, I can sneak in the content unexpectedly."

Payne's teaching philosophy in chemistry is "Chem is try." She creates a learning environment where her students feel very comfortable volunteering, asking questions, giving answers and having fun.

"The comfort level in the classroom is a sign of

the trust and respect we have for each other. My students enter the classroom with a level of expectation that something cool is going to happen during the next 47 minutes we have together. Very few of my students leave the class without experiencing some form of success and a sense that they had fun doing it," said Payne.

Jeffersontown High School, with 954 students, strives to prepare all students for success in postsecondary pursuits by emphasizing academic excellence, diverse opportunities, and personal responsibilities. The school's academic index in science on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) has increased 13 points between 1999 and 2006.

"Missy's influence on student success does not stop in the classroom. She is immersed in the total school operation," said Principal Marsha Dohn. "Missy chairs our curriculum committee and serves on the school council. Her dedication to higher academic standards for students is echoed in the decisions of each group. In addition to constant innovative spirit in the decision-making process, she supports student activities and sports. If the faculty selected a 'Ms. Jeffersontown' from their own ranks, it would be Missy."

MORE INFO ...

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National award honors excellence in teaching

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST), sponsored by the National Science Foundation, is the nation's highest honor for teaching in these fields. Teachers who receive the award serve as models for their colleagues and are among the leaders in the improvement of science and mathematics education.

Established by Congress in 1983, the annual awards program identifies outstanding mathematics and science teachers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Kentucky teachers Paula Cissell and Melissa Payne were among the 100 secondary (grades 7-12) teachers recognized in 2005.

The award recognizes the contributions K-12 teachers make to America's legacy of progress by encouraging young people to study and understand mathematics and science. Elementary teachers (grades K-6) receive the award in even-numbered years, and secondary teachers receive the award in odd-numbered years.

Awardees receive a \$10,000 gift from the National Science Foundation, the independent federal agency that administers the awards program. They participate in an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., for a week of celebratory events and professional development activities.

The 2007 Presidential Award nominations are currently open for mathematics and science teachers in grades 7-12. Public, private and parochial teachers can be nominated by anyone except themselves. The 2006 awards for teachers in grades K-6 will be announced in the spring of 2007.

MORE INFO ...
www.paemst.org

Middle school pre-AP prepares students for success

By Cathy Lindsey

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Kentucky public school educators face a challenge. Many first-year college students in Kentucky require at least one remedial course. According to a study released last month by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE), 53 percent of the state's students needed at least one remedial course when they enrolled in a public university or community college in 2004.

The study also shows that first-year students who enter college prepared to do college-level work are increasingly more likely to return for their second year than under-prepared students. The analysis concluded that Kentucky public schools have failed to significantly increase the percentage of students arriving prepared for college courses.

The Kentucky Board of Education and the Kentucky Department of Education are confronting this challenge head on and have been focused on improving the educational outcomes for high school graduates through a Refocusing Secondary Education Initiative. In 2004, the board adopted an agenda to redesign the high school experience. The agenda calls for a more rigorous

curriculum and more relevant experiences to better prepare students for life after high school.

"We are working to create a culture that supports the changing needs of today's growing expectations," said Jennifer Carroll, a branch manager in the department's Division of Secondary and Virtual Learning. "We know this starts with redesigning schools around rigor, relevance and enhanced relationships beginning in the middle grades."

With the implementation of the Individual Learning Plan in the 6th grade this school year and the EXPLORE high school readiness exam for 8th-grade students beginning next year, it is becoming increasingly clear how important middle school education is in Kentucky's high school restructuring agenda.

With the goal of all students leaving high school prepared and ready to pursue the next level of learning, the department has identified five essential principles that schools should strive to achieve. They are:

- Every student is actively engaged in high-quality, real-world learning.
- Every school creates personalized learning environments that provide students

with support from adults toward the attainment of Individual Learning Plan goals.

- Every educator collaborates in professional learning communities to increase internal capacity to provide high-quality instruction and engaging learning experiences for every student.
- Every student completes a standards-based curriculum that includes educational opportunities outside of the traditional high school experience as preparation for their postsecondary life.
- Every leader organizes systems in response to student needs.

Some schools are well on their way to showing progress related to these principles, Carroll said. For example, Fayette and Pike counties are lead Kentucky districts in a National Governor's Association (NGA) grant program to expand Advanced Placement (AP) participation to a more diverse group of students and to increase AP success rates among all students starting at the middle school level and continuing through high school.

Middle and high school teachers in these districts have been trained to teach the SpringBoard curriculum, a pre-AP program. SpringBoard is the College Board's curriculum for schools and districts in mathematics and English language arts for all students in grades 6-12. The curriculum is aligned with Kentucky's standards and is designed to address the academic requirements needed for success in the first year of college.

"We are always looking for ways to increase rigor," said Jane Dreidame, principal at Southern Middle School (Fayette County). "This curriculum emphasizes depth over breadth and fosters critical thinking skills."

The standards-based instructional framework begins at the middle school level building the foundation in reading, writing and mathematics. It maps skills and expectations through the high school grades to develop the academic skills students need to master for success in college-level work.

High schools receiving the NGA grant in both Fayette and Pike counties use the SpringBoard curriculum to continue to build on the higher expectations set in middle school. The purpose of the pre-AP program is to increase the preparation of all students for AP coursework.

The goal is to help teachers provide a systematic, seamless and rigorous curriculum throughout middle and high schools, Dreidame said.

The SpringBoard curriculum provides instructional resources including workbooks for every student that also can be incorporated with

other texts and materials. Teachers have access to model instructional units that illustrate strategies focused on critical thinking, embedded assessments and self-reflection exercises.

"I love using SpringBoard in my classroom because I feel it teaches children right from the beginning to learn at higher levels," said Julie Dillon, an 8th-grade language arts teacher at Southern Middle.

Dillon uses the curriculum to incorporate different genres of literature in which students are interested and to which they can relate. For example, students have analyzed song lyrics and used movie clips to illustrate characters and journeys that different characters take within a piece of literature, she said.

In analyzing literature texts, Dillon's students use the SOAPStone method, a SpringBoard strategy for reading and writing. Each letter stands for a different part of the process. "S" stands for speaker. "O" stands for occasion. "A" stands for audience. "P" stands for purpose. "S" stands for subject, and "T" stands for tone. Students read a selected text and determine the appropriate response for each letter.

"They really have to explain what they are doing," Dillon said, "which encourages a higher order of thinking."

She said this type of content delivery is more engaging for students. "It makes for interesting thinking," she said. "When students think a novel is boring, this helps them address the content in a way they can relate and enjoy it. It helps hook them in."

Dillon said the curriculum offers lessons that address different learning styles by allowing movement, hands-on learning, some lecture, some media technology, working in groups and working individually.

"It allows for the artist, the poet, the athlete, the drama queens and kings, and all specialties to be addressed," Dillon said. "My kids are smiling, loving language arts and learning at high levels. It has rejuvenated my classroom."

Professional development also is offered with the curriculum. Teachers trained in the SpringBoard curriculum receive follow-up training, online support and teacher mentors.

The curriculum also provides online support like diagnostic assessments. These provide immediate feedback to assess individual student skills, as well as whole class, school or district progress. Other online resources include self-assessments for teachers to inform planning and baseline evaluations of incoming 6th-grade students.

"We've seen that the curriculum is hooking in students who haven't performed at a high level before," Principal Dreidame said. "We think we're on to something really great here in preparing all of our students for high school."

MORE INFO ...

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www.collegeboard.com/springboard
www.apcentral.collegeboard.com



Photo by Rick McComb

Julie Dillon gives directions for an assignment in which her 8th-grade language arts students were to restructure phrases and strong verbs from four literary passages into original poems. The Southern Middle School students then used their critical-thinking skills to determine if their poems were the same as the author's original purpose.

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(NBPT) and a recipient of Mayfield Excellence and Mayfield Outstanding awards and an Innovative Teaching Grant.

Diana Glenn

Glenn has 26 years' teaching experience. She has spent 12 of those years in her current position as a middle school science teacher. She earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Arkansas and a master's degree at the University of Louisville.

Glenn's professional affiliations include the Kentucky and National Education Associations, the Kentucky and National Science Teachers Association



Glenn

tions and the National Middle School Association. She is a North Central Association Accreditation Team member and a recipient of the South View Junior High Teacher of the Year and the South View Attendance District Teacher of the Year awards.

She has been nominated for Disney Teacher of the Year and for Who's Who in Teaching. She's also been cited for exceptional performance in the Department of Defense Schools program.

Tracy Lambert

Lambert has six years' teaching experience, all in her current position as a high school French instructor. She earned her bachelor and master's degrees at the University of Kentucky and has achieved National Board Certification in World Languages Other Than English.

Lambert continues her professional and leadership development as a participant



Lambert

and a presenter in a range of workshops, conferences and other education-enhancement initiatives. She has mentored students and fellow teachers, and her contributions to the teaching profession have been recognized at district and national levels. She further supports her community through involvement in church, cultural and civic activities.

This is the sixth year Ashland Inc. and the Kentucky Department of Education have sponsored the Kentucky Teacher Awards. Applications for the program were distributed across the state, and the first tier

of the selection process was completed in early September, with 24 teachers selected as 2007 Ashland Inc. Teacher Achievement Award winners. Nine top scorers – three each from the elementary, middle and high school levels – were selected, and teams of educators visited their classrooms to view these educators at work and to conduct personal interviews.

From those nine, three were selected as 2007 Kentucky Teachers of the Year, one teacher at each level. The overall Kentucky Teacher of the Year then was selected, based on a compilation of scores from all phases of the judging.

Ashland Inc. has recognized outstanding Kentucky teachers with its Teacher Achievement Awards since 1988. Nearly \$525,000 has been awarded to 335 teachers in grades P-12.

'NEXT' has information for high school students

The Lane Report's *NEXT – Your Future After High School in Kentucky* is hot off the presses and soon will be delivered to every high school in the state. The magazine is printed annually to help Kentucky high school students make important decisions about life after graduation.

The magazine serves as a guide to postsecondary education and career options. It offers informative articles and tips about college visits, financial aid opportunities, military options, career choices and more. It also provides a guide to Kentucky's colleges and universities.

This year's issue is expected to arrive in schools in late November. Principals, guidance counselors and teachers are encouraged to announce and distribute this resource. With assistance from the Kentucky Department of Education, *NEXT* is given to students in grades 9-12 and has an estimated readership of 375,000 students, educators and parents.

NEXT is underwritten in part by Ashland Inc., the Kentucky Lottery, the Kentucky Beef Council, the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority and Louisville Gas & Electric/Kentucky Utilities. United Parcel Service is the official delivery service for *NEXT* magazine.

Visit *NEXT* magazine online at www.tlrnext.com.

Geography Awareness Week celebration is in November

Classroom resources for Geography Awareness Week, Nov. 12-18, are online at the Kentucky geographic Web site and several Web sites supported by the *National Geographic*. This year's theme is "Africa in 3D — Diversity, Demographics and Discovery."

Teachers also can receive free "Africa in 3D" maps for their students. The reverse side of each map contains African recipes, arts and crafts ideas, music and rhythm games, and other suggestions for teaching African culture, said Janet Burks, Geography Action! coordinator for Kentucky. Contact Burks at the e-mail address or phone number below with the number of maps needed.

Kentucky teachers are invited to e-mail

information to Burks, a 6th-grade social studies teacher, about their classroom lessons and activities on Africa in conjunction with Geography Awareness Week. All teachers submitting photos (in a Word document) will receive \$5 and other prizes. Entries will be judged and prizes of \$100, \$50 and \$25 will be given to the three teachers who submit a variety of lessons and activities most relevant to this year's theme. In addition, Kentucky students between the ages of 9 and 14 and teachers in grades P-12 can enter the Hands On Explorer Challenge Contest to win a 10-day trip to South Africa during August 2007. Contest entry deadline is Nov. 30. Information about the contest can be downloaded from the Internet.

MORE INFO ...

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Classroom resources — www.ngsednet.org/kentucky, www.nationalgeographic.com/geographyaction and www.mywonderfulworld.org/educators_welcome.html

Contest information — www.pfizerch.com/purell/content/everyday_explorer/index.html

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Recently, a few districts, supported by their legislative delegations, have raised concerns about several technical issues relating to the equity of the SEEK formula among districts. In response, department staff presented the concerns to a third-party school finance expert to review and make recommendations.

Department staff presented to the board the specific issues and expert recommendations related to possible legislative changes to SEEK. The board asked for further information and discussion at upcoming meetings.

Search for new commissioner

The board voted to accept the resignation of Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit, who has accepted a new position as executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers in Washington, D. C. The board named Deputy Commissioner Kevin Noland to serve as interim commissioner beginning Nov. 3.

The board agreed to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a firm to conduct a search for the next education commissioner. Board members Rev. C.B. Akins (Fayette County), Bonnie Freeman (Jefferson County), Judy Gibbons (Kenton County), Keith Travis (Marshall County) and David Webb (Edmonson County) will serve on

the board's Search Committee. Jeanne Ferguson (Jefferson County) is an alternate for the committee.

Kentucky educators, administrators and the general public can provide input on the search for the new education commissioner via a Web-based comment form posted on the department's Web site (www.education.ky.gov). Visitors to the site can post their comments in a designated message area. By clicking on the "Send your message" button, all comments will be sent to the search committee.

Selection of a search firm to find qualified candidates for the position may occur at the board's November meeting. The board also agreed to accept a proposed timeline for the search, with the possibility of top candidates being named in March 2007.

The next meeting of the board will be Nov. 1 in Frankfort.

MORE INFO ...

www.education.ky.gov — Click on "KDE QuickLinks" in the upper right-hand corner. Scroll down to "State Board of Education" and click.

To comment on the commissioner search, go to www.education.ky.gov/EmailForm/NextCommissioner.aspx



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increasing,” said former Kentucky Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit as the data was released earlier this fall. “Since CATS was fully implemented in 2000, the percentage of students scoring at the novice, or lowest, level in elementary schools has been cut in half in nearly every subject area. The percentages of novice performers at the middle and high school levels also have decreased.

“Although only a handful of our schools are in need of state assistance, I am concerned about those schools that are languishing at low levels. CATS holds schools and districts accountable for progress, and some schools are not moving forward as they should,” he said.

Schools are expected to have accountability indices of 100 (on a 140-point scale) by the year 2014, eight years from now. The Kentucky Department of Education provides targeted assistance and resources for struggling schools that do not reach their biennial goals.

Student performance is categorized with four levels: novice, apprentice, proficient and distinguished. The lowest percentages of novices by subject area are in science at the elementary level (7.36 percent); reading at the middle school level (7.26 percent); and writing at the high school level (14.11 percent).

The highest percentages of proficient and higher scores by subject area are in reading at the elementary and middle levels (69.67 and 63.06 percent, respectively) and practical living/vocational studies at the high school level (55.5 percent).

Schools also must meet dropout rate and novice reduction requirements. The dropout rate requirements are that a school must have an average dropout rate of less than 5.3 percent over the biennium or an average rate that is at least one-half of 1 percent lower than its average rate of the previous biennium.

To meet the novice reduction requirements, a school must reduce its percentage of novices so that, by 2014, it has only 5 percent of its students in the novice category.

During this cycle, 44 schools — 24 for the first time — have reached or exceeded 100 on their 2005-2006 combined indices. (See accompanying chart for the list of schools reaching proficiency and beyond.)

In addition, 474 schools were honored for reaching recognition points. When a school’s accountability index passes 55, 66, 77, 88 and 100, it receives a one-time recognition and a flag that is color-coded to the level passed.

Pace Setter Schools

Pace Setter Schools are the highest-scoring 5 percent of all schools that have reached the fourth recognition point (88) and met the dropout rate and novice reduction requirements. Sixty-three schools are Pace Setters for this accountability cycle, with indices ranging from 97.9 to 116.1.

Those schools and their districts are **Anchorage Independent** — Anchorage Public Elementary; **Beechwood Independent** — Beechwood Elementary; **Boone County** — North Pointe Elementary; **Bowling Green Independent** — Potter Gray Elementary and W.R. McNeill Elementary; **Clark County** — Trapp Elementary; **Clay County** — Big Creek Elementary, Hacker Elementary, Oneida Elementary and Paces Creek Elementary; **Corbin Independent** —

Schools reaching or exceeding 100 (2005-2006 combined indices)		
District	School	2005-2006 combined index
Anchorage Independent	Anchorage Public Elementary	107.5
Bowling Green Independent	W.R. McNeill Elementary	105.8
Clay County	Big Creek Elementary	101.9
Clay County	Hacker Elementary	103.6
Daviess County	Country Heights Elementary	101.6
Daviess County	Deer Park Elementary	104.1
Daviess County	East View Elementary	104.1
Daviess County	Highland Elementary	113.2
Daviess County	Meadow Lands Elementary	101.6
Daviess County	Sorgho Elementary	104.6
Daviess County	Tamarack Elementary	104.7
Daviess County	Utica Elementary	110.6
Daviess County	West Louisville Elementary	103.2
Fayette County	Maxwell Spanish Immersion Elementary	100.6
Fayette County	Rosa Parks Elementary	101.5
Fayette County	SCAPA at Bluegrass Elementary	107.7
Fayette County	Veterans Park Elementary	109.4
Fort Thomas Independent	Johnson Elementary	102.1
Fort Thomas Independent	Moyer Elementary	104.0
Fort Thomas Independent	Woodfill Elementary	105.9
Graves County	Farmington Elementary	105.9
Graves County	Graves County Central Elementary	104.6
Green County	Summersville Elementary	101.4
Henderson County	East Heights Elementary	104.4
Hopkins County	Hanson Elementary	102.2
Jefferson County	duPont Manual High	104.6
Jefferson County	Greathouse Shryock Traditional Elementary	104.3
Jefferson County	Louisville Male High	103.2
Jefferson County	Schaffner Traditional Elementary	101.3
Johnson County	Central Elementary	116.1
Johnson County	Flat Gap Elementary	105.9
Johnson County	Meade Memorial Elementary	100.1
Laurel County	Bush Elementary	103.3
Magoffin County	Middle Fork Elementary	107.4
Marion County	Calvary Elementary	103.6
Metcalfe County	Summer Shade Elementary	103.4
Morgan County	Ezel Elementary	107.1
Newport Independent	Mildred Dean Elementary	101.1
Ohio County	Southern Elementary	103.9
Pikeville Independent	Pikeville Elementary	100.2
Rockcastle County	Brodhead Elementary	110.3
Russell County	Jamestown Elementary	105.1
Russell County	Union Chapel Elementary	102.3
Scott County	Anne Mason Elementary	103.0

South Elementary; **Daviess County** — Country Heights Elementary, Deer Park Elementary, East View Elementary, Highland Elementary, Meadow Lands Elementary, Sorgho Elementary, Tamarack Elementary, Utica Elementary, West Louisville Elementary and Whitesville Elementary; **Fayette County** — Maxwell Spanish Immersion Elementary, Rosa Parks Elementary, SCAPA at Bluegrass Elementary and Veterans Park Elementary; **Fort Thomas Independent** — Highlands High, Johnson Elementary, Moyer Elementary and Woodfill Elementary; **Graves County** — Cuba Elementary, Farmington Elementary and Graves County Central Elementary; **Green County** — Summersville Elementary; **Henderson County** — East Heights Elementary; **Hopkins County** — Hanson Elementary; **Jef-**

ferson County — Audubon Traditional Elementary, Carter Traditional Elementary, duPont Manual High, Greathouse Shryock Traditional Elementary, Louisville Male High, Norton Elementary and Schaffner Traditional Elementary; **Johnson County** — Central Elementary, Flat Gap Elementary and Meade Memorial Elementary; **Laurel County** — Bush Elementary; **Magoffin County** — Middle Fork Elementary and Millard Hensley Elementary; **Marion County** — Calvary Elementary; **McCracken County** — Heath Elementary; **Metcalfe County** — Summer Shade Elementary; **Morgan County** — Ezel Elementary; **Newport Independent** — Mildred Dean Elementary; **Ohio County** — Southern Elementary; **Oldham County** — Buckner Elementary; **Pike County** — Southside Elementary;

Pikeville Independent — Pikeville Elementary; **Rockcastle County** — Brodhead Elementary; **Russell County** — Jamestown Elementary and Union Chapel Elementary; **Scott County** — Anne Mason Elementary; **Warren County** — Rich Pond Elementary and **Williamstown Independent** — Williamstown Elementary.

District Accountability

Under CATS, school districts also are held accountable for the performance of their students. School districts are not formally designated under the same classifications as schools, but this year, specific accountability requirements for districts begin. Forty districts were classified as Exemplary Growth Districts. This means that all schools in the districts were classified as “Progressing” or “Meets Goal” and have met the dropout and novice reduction criteria established for schools.

Five districts were classified as Audit Level 1 Districts. This means that one or more schools in each district were classified as “Assistance Level 3” and were not classified as “Assistance Level 3” in the previous accountability cycle. Each district will modify its comprehensive plan to include support for those Level 3 schools.

Three districts were classified as Audit Level 2 Districts. This means that at least one school in each district has been classified as “Assistance Level 3” for two or more consecutive accountability cycles. A district evaluation team will conduct an audit of each school’s curriculum and instruction to ensure that support for Level 3 schools is implemented.

No classification was given to 128 districts.

2006 CTBS results

Results from the spring 2006 Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) show that Kentucky students are making slow but steady progress in reading comprehension, language arts and mathematics. The tests were administered last April to all students in the end of primary (3rd), 6th and 9th grades.

The 2006 statewide scores for reading — in national percentiles — are 58, end of primary (3rd); 62, 6th grade, and 59, 9th grade. Languages arts statewide scores are 54, end of primary (3rd); 53, 6th grade, and 50, 9th grade. Mathematics statewide scores are 65, end of primary (3rd); 63, 6th grade, and 52, 9th grade.

MORE INFO ...

www.education.ky.gov — Click on “Testing and Reporting” in the left-hand menu, scroll down to “Reports” and click.

Phone number update

The Kentucky Department of Education has disconnected its toll-free phone line — (800) KDE-KERA — which has been in service since the early 1990s to provide public access to information and resources about education reform. To get information about department programs and services or to reach employees, go to www.education.ky.gov/KDE/homepagerepository/footer/contact+us.htm on the Internet. Phone listings are available by program, agency function or a staff member’s last name.

Leadership Letter

Compiled by Joy Barr
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State Advanced Placement data released for 2006

The number of Kentucky public high school students taking Advanced Placement (AP) examinations and scoring at high levels continues to rise, indicates data released from the College Board. The College Board's Advanced Placement Program enables students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Based on their performance on rigorous AP exams, students can earn credit, advanced placement or both for college.

Since 2004, the number of Kentucky public high school students taking AP examinations and scoring 3, 4 or 5 has increased. AP exam scores are reported on a 1-5 scale. A score of 3, 4 or 5 qualifies a student to receive college credit or advanced placement.

The performance of ethnic groups in Kentucky's public schools also showed increases from 2005 to 2006. Since 2000, the number of non-white public school students taking one or more AP exams has nearly tripled.

Kentucky schools receive NCLB blue ribbon honors

Four Kentucky public schools have been named 2006 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education. The four are: Field Elementary (Jefferson County); Hanson Elementary (Hopkins County); Mason-Corinth Elementary (Grant County) and Summer Shade Elementary (Metcalf County).

Four Kentucky private schools also were named. They are Immaculate Heart of Mary School in Boone County; Saints Peter and Paul Catholic School in Fayette County; St. Joseph School in Kenton County and St. Thomas School in Campbell County. The NCLB Blue Ribbon Schools program honors public and private P-12 schools that are either academically superior or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement.

The program requires schools to meet either of two assessment criteria. It recognizes schools that have at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance in reading and mathematics over the last three years in accordance with state assessment systems. The program also rewards schools that score in the top 10 percent statewide in reading and mathematics on state assessments. In addition, schools must make Adequate Yearly Progress under the requirements of the federal NCLB Act.

Student computer and Internet use increases

Most students use computers and a majority use the Internet, reports the National Center for Education Statistics in its annual

statistical analysis report on Computer and Internet Use by Students. Using data from a 2003 survey, the report finds about 91 percent of children age 3 through grade 12 use computers. About 59 percent of the students use the Internet.

According to the September 2006 report, computer use begins early. About two-thirds of children in nursery school and 80 percent of kindergartners use computers. Ninety-seven percent of high school students use computers.

Private school students are more likely than public school students to use computers at home, but public school students are more likely to use computers and the Internet at school. Overall computer and Internet use rates for boys and girls are about the same.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006065>

Everything you wanted to know about NCLB

"Everything You Ever Wanted to Know" about the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 can be found on a new Web site located at www.publiceducation.org/nclb_main. The site offers simple, easy-to-understand materials about the federal law for parents and community leaders.

'Flat Brady' connects learning, creates excitement in Graves County Schools

"Flat Brady," a life-sized replica of Graves County Public Schools Superintendent Brady Link, is creating connections throughout the district's ten schools. Based on concepts from two popular books, the character mysteriously appears each school day in a different Graves County P-12 classroom.

The project is designed to help teachers across the curriculum better understand what is happening at other grade levels in implementing classroom rigor, relevance and relationships, said Paul Schaumburg, district community relations director. It also has created instant connections for Superintendent Link as he visits district schools.

Each class welcomes the visitor and chronicles its activities in photos and journals. The materials are then posted on the "Flat Brady" section on the district's Web site (www.graves.k12.ky.us).

Two very different,

popular books inspired the project: *Flat Stanley* by Jeff Brown, and *The World is Flat* by Thomas Friedman. The life-size cutout, which stands on a special base, breaks down into two pieces for easy transporting from school to school.

"I was somewhat skeptical about how this project would be received, but as Flat Brady has moved around the district, it has really created some excitement in classrooms," said Link. Other district administrators say Flat Brady is creating greater awareness of what is happening at other grade levels among teachers and interest and excitement among students.

"The idea was to document and reflect on what we're doing with instruction throughout our school district," said Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Tommy Scott, who created the project.

Education Week highlights Kentucky intervention program in special report

In its third annual "Leading for Learning" special report, the national education publication, *Education Week*, focuses on the new roles that states are taking as they provide support for low-performing schools and districts and the increasingly critical charge of building local capacity for instruction.

The report analyzed data on schools and districts identified for improvement in 2005 under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, based on 2004-2005 data.

Nationwide, 8,446 schools and 1,624 districts that receive federal aid were listed as "in need of improvement" for failing to meet

improvement targets at least two years in a row. In addition, 2,399 districts have at least one school in that status. The law says that all schools and districts so labeled are entitled to technical support from their states.

The report also noted that together, all the Title I schools in the country listed as needing improvement under the law in 2005 served a total of some 5.8 million students, 66 percent who lived in poverty and 75 percent who were members of ethnic and racial minorities.

Profiles in the article include a highlight of the evolving intervention efforts under way in Kentucky, namely districts working with "voluntary assistance teams."

Under this initiative, the Highly Skilled Educators program is expanded to districts, including school boards. Four educators join the district superintendent on a team with the goal of making changes that will improve student achievement.

The team consists of one Kentucky Department of Education staff member, a Highly Skilled Educator, a school board member from another district (chosen by the Kentucky School Boards Association) and a retired superintendent (chosen by the Kentucky Association of School Administrators). These members are from districts that have succeeded in raising achievement. The superintendent of the struggling district is the chairman of the group.

The national report quotes Department of Education Associate Commissioner Steve Schenck whose office works with leadership and school improvement programs. "With this model, everyone understands what the intervention is, and they support it. It's about everybody having the same plan and supporting that plan," he said.



"Flat Brady" participates in story time with early primary students at Wingo Elementary (Graves County). Students showed the upper torso of the superintendent's cutout how to raise its hand to answer a question and helped it answer questions about the story. After the cutout visits a classroom, the teacher posts on the district Web site (www.graves.k12.ky.us) a classroom photo and a summary of the day's lesson showing how rigor, relevance and relationships were part of classroom learning that day.

Photo submitted by Graves County Schools

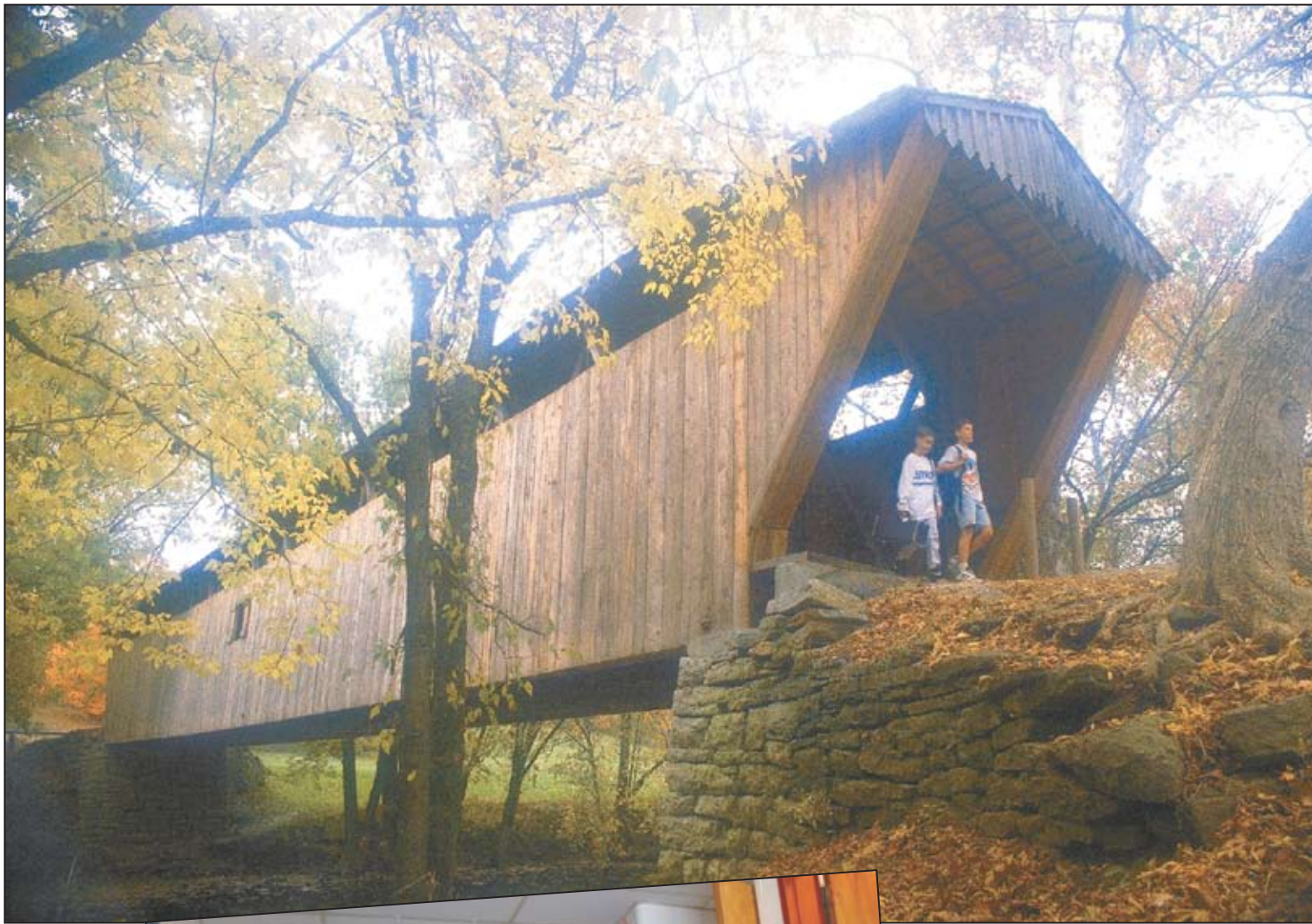
Celebrating American Education week with photos

Schools throughout Kentucky will be celebrating American Education Week Nov. 12-18 with a variety of activities to honor the men and women who are involved in improving education opportunities for public school students. The weeklong event focuses on the theme, "Great Public Schools: a basic right and our responsibility."

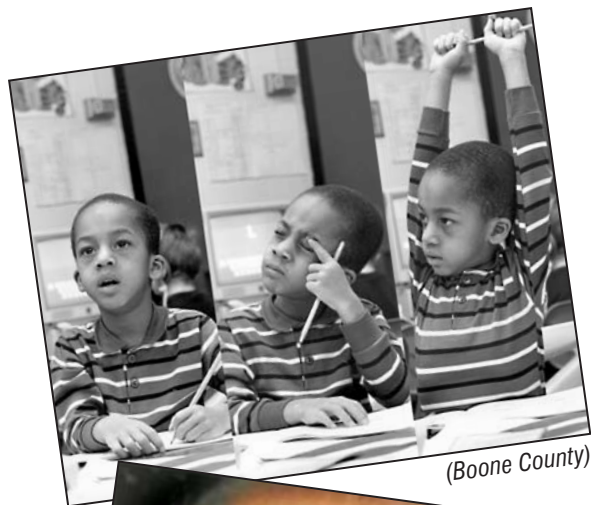
Kentucky Teacher devotes this page to the work of Rick McComb as a celebration of education in Kentucky. These photos are among McComb's favorites from the tens of thousands of photographs he took during his 28-year career in the Kentucky Department of Education.

Traveling thousands of miles each month for *Kentucky Teacher*, McComb photographed instructional activities in districts throughout the state. His photos allowed our readers to meet many of the Kentucky educators who take seriously the responsibility of making a difference in their schools. His favorite subjects, as this page reflects, were the students caught in the act of learning about themselves and the world around them.

McComb retires from the department Nov. 1.



(Franklin County)



(Boone County)



(Anderson County)



(Oldham County)



(Boyd County)



(Jefferson County)



(Scott County)